

1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1951 SG4 Araucanians SG4
Mapuche-Huilliche

132

MISCHA TITIEV

796 of the field ended, and a *machi* came forward to take charge of the *ñillatun*. Since no *machi* lives at Coigue, the chief had asked a woman from a neighboring reduction to officiate. No pay is rendered on these occasions, except in the form of gifts of food. The *machi* was dressed in traditional Araucanian garb, with a neat, clean apron, a kerchief on her head, and a minimum of ornaments. There is a belief that the deities respond better to the prayers of the poor and humble. She had the appearance of a sturdy, barefooted woman of early middle age, with strong but rather handsome features. She carried a *kul-truñ* and a string of half a dozen sleigh bells. As she came up to the altar, a younger woman similarly dressed but bareheaded stood beside her with a gourd rattle in hand. Facing east toward the cross and the distant Andes, the *machi* raised the *kul-truñ* in her left hand, struck it rapidly several times, and began to intone a speedy, somewhat monotonous chant in which she called upon *Chau* ("Father") to listen to the prayers that were to come. She then thanked him for crops, animals, and other blessings, and asked for rain and continued favors in the coming season.²² At the close of each verse the tempo of the drum beats increased rapidly and, at the signal, "Ya!" the crowd raised the shout of "Ya, ya, YAI!" Every now and then a man sounded a blast on a *trutruka* (see Pl. XI, Fig. 1.) The chant was repeated ● [801] four times, (four is the sacred number of the Araucanians), and as it drew to a finish several women advanced to the altar, broke off small branches, and held them in the left hand, while one woman dipped a twig into a bowl of water and occasionally asperged all the celebrants. At this stage Chihuaicura and the other men who had dedicated the cross knelt bareheaded behind the *machi*.

796 When the preliminary chanting ended, a new formation was
535 made. This consisted of several lines of men and women of all ages, wearing all sorts of native or Chilean clothes. The *machi* and her assistant stood in the center of the front row, flanked by adult women in Araucanian dress. In time to a new chant

²² For a text of this sort, see Augusta, 1934, p. 30, No. 14.

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957

SG4 Araucanians SG4

Chile

WHOLE VOL. ARAUCANIAN CHILD LIFE—HILGER

151

tain and sergeant from the leader's locality have moved, on horseback, to where the sacrificial sheep and hens have been tied. After the leader has finished the pipe, these two men dismount, and while they are doing so, several persons throw pieces of lung toward them. The two men then pray quietly for about 5 minutes, addressing their prayers to *chau* and to *wenemapu fluke* (the woman with *chau*). "It looks as though these prayers were being addressed to the sun, for the men look directly at the sun." They again mount their horses and ride nearly 50 yards beyond the sun shelters, one carrying a vessel of *mudai* and the other a pipe filled with tobacco. At this distance they gallop completely around the ellipse of the grounds four times. Each time they come back to the place where the sacrificial animals are tied, pieces of lung are thrown toward them, and all the people yell "Ya-ah!" After the fourth ride is completed, the two men slide off their horses, and each takes a *colihue* from the middle of the row at the *porufe*. With these in their hands both dance around the *porufe* four times. After this all the participating young men run round the *porufe*, each one carrying a vessel of *mudai*, and everyone yells "Ya-ah!"

One-half of the sheep that was sacrificed is consumed in the sacred fireplace; the other half is roasted over the sacred fire and is then divided among the people by the captains and sergeants. The first piece that is cut off the roasted meat is placed at the *porufe* for *chau*. All bones left after the flesh has been eaten are burned in the sacred fire (pl. 31, 3). Great care is always taken that none of them is gotten by dogs. The entrails and hides are buried so close to the fire that dogs will not dig for them. Toward the end of the ceremonial, the tortillas are cut into strips and shared by all; the *mudai*, too, is consumed by participating persons. This is drunk from wooden tumblers or pottery vessels.

The ceremonial of the second day is merely a repetition of the first day's, except that usually all hens are sacrificed on the second day by being thrown on the fire to be consumed there.

Two old men—one each from a separate locality—act as policemen. "Order must be maintained about the place; there must be no laughing or visiting during the ceremonies." Informants said that the recurrence of the number four has no significance—four is not considered a sacred number. According to Cooper's sources (1946, pp. 742-743), the *rewé* at one time was one of the main features of the *jillatun*. It was not known to have been used in areas I visited.

The *konchitun* (sharing a meal of mutton supplied by one of two men) is not a part of the ceremonial, but is an adjunct to it. Formerly it was an expression of sincere mutual friendship between two men

Death and Fertility Rites

85

velañ mán (*velañ*: *velorio* or wake; *mán*: right), lasts at least four days and nights. Its termination at the end of this ritually auspicious number of days tends to coincide with the arrival of the last relatives who live some distance away. Awaiting the distant relatives is often given as the reason for the delayed burial, but, particularly in instances where some members of the deceased's family are anxious to get the body into the ground, "like the Catholics," this represents the opinion of few Mapuche. For the vast majority, the reason for the delay in final burial is stated differently. The body is displayed in an approximation to what present-day Mapuche consider the traditional manner, because in this way they are able to accord it the respect prescribed by *admapu*. Although on display, the corpse is kept isolated, insofar as it is not touched by the viewers. It is dangerous. This is common knowledge. It is preserved in state for the ritually perfect number of four days (if possible) because by doing so the well-being of the living as well as the dead tends to be insured. The notion of "curing" or "sustaining" the spirit of the deceased shows that this ritual delay in burial is a necessary procedure during the transitional period in which the newly released spirit is in danger of falling prey to the forces of evil.

There is some evidence that the Mapuche formerly practiced urn burial (cf. Cooper 1946: 734 ff., and bibliography), and that this custom later gave way to preserving not only the bones but the entire eviscerated corpse through smoking. Present-day informants know nothing of urn burial or of special treatment of the deceased's bones, although they are aware that their remote ancestors interred the bones of their dead in urns, having discovered these ancient burial receptacles while plowing their fields and so forth. The practice of smoking the corpse and wrapping it in an ox or horse skin is part of the oral tradition, the few cases which occur today representing a disintegrating tradition (which is dubious) and eliciting sorrowful remarks from a few elders. Regardless of whether or not the corpse is actually handled in a way which distinguishes the Mapuche wake from the Chilean *velorio*, there is still a decidedly different emphasis in the concern which the Mapuche have about the state of the corpse. The spirit does not immedi-

764
574764
[78][788]
[801]764
178

[173]

000